



Aruba celebrates May Day with the Royal Marines' Open House.

The Open House at the Savaneta Camp of the Royal Dutch Marines is a May Day tradition in Aruba, and each year it gets bigger and better, with more events and interesting activities. The Marines conduct a number of exciting demonstrations, and island children get to be soldiers for a day. Quite a few were found wearing camouflage as they explored the grounds and seas around the Savaneta installation, enjoying boat rides, rock climbing, rappelling and enough attractions to fill an entire day.

All activities were free, but the proceeds from the fees for the flea market booths and half the proceeds from the sale of food and beverages will all be donated to a local charity, as will all the proceeds from sales of Marine Camp logo items. This year, a number of foundations were allowed to market their goods that help support their efforts in preserving Aruba's turtle population, such as TortugAruba, or providing a home for wayward puppies and kittens, as does the Wayaca Animal Shelter. These proceeds were kept to assist them in their work for the community.

A number of vendors donated goods and services to be raffled off at the end of the day, and happy couples will enjoy a weekend stay at the Marriott Resort, The Mill, or the La Cabana All Suites Beach Resort. The famous Sunday Brunches at the Radisson and the Hyatt will have additional visitors and excursions on the Jolly Pirates, The Atlantis Submarine and with De Palm tours went to lucky winners. The Tulip and Mango Restaurants along with the Divi Mega All Inclusive, all located around Eagle Beach will host some lucky couples for free dinners. Gift certificates from Ling and Son's Supermarket, Kiekebooh!, Marathon Video Rental, Boolchand's, Texas, Kok Optica, Polar and Balashi Beer distributors all added to the funds to be donated. Some other lucky winners will be traveling with two tickets to Curacao on the newly inaugurated Tiara Airlines, or with a substantial gift certificate from Nautilus Travel Agency.

May Day is more than a "get acquainted day" with the Royal Dutch Marines, it is fun, excitement, entertainment and the Aruban answer to a theme park! Unfortunately, it is only one day a year, but it is a day that is thoroughly anticipated and enjoyed by all islanders.